

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 06809 231111Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 DHA-05
/060 W

-----104467 231115Z /10

P 231038Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0546

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 6809

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PL

SUBJ: POLISH PASTORAL LETTER ON MASS MEDIA

REF: STATE 224085

1. DURING A CALL ON THE SPOKESMAN OF THE
EPISCOPATE SEPTEMBER 20, AN EMBASSY INQUIRED
ABOUT THE PASTORAL LETTER THAT WAS THE SUBJECT OF
THE WASHINGTON POST STORY. THE SPOKESMAN POINTED
OUT THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH A SUGGESTION AT VATICAN II,
ROMAN CATHOLICS CHURCHES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD DEVOTE
ONE SUNDAY EACH YEAR TO CONSIDERATION OF THE INFLUENCE
OF THE MASS MEDIA ON SPIRITUAL AND MORAL LIFE. THE DAY
CHOSEN IN POLAND IS THE THIRD SUNDAY IN SEPTEMBER.
THE SPOKESMAN SAID THE CONTENTS AND TONE OF
THIS YEAR'S LETTER WERE NOT INTENDED TO AMRK AN
ESCALATION OF DIFFERENCES IN THE SUBJECT BETWEEN
CHURCH AND STATE IN POLAND. HE CHARACTERIZED THE
LETTER AS A ROUTING EXPRESSION OF VIEWS KNOWN TO
BOTH SIDES. HE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI
HAD APPROVED THE LETTER, WHICH WAS PREPARED BEFORE
THE CARDINAL'S HOSPITALIZATION.

2. WHILE ITS QUOTED EXCERPTS WERE ACCURATE, THE
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WASHINGTON POST STORY EMPHASIZED PART OF ONE PARA-
GRAPH OF THE LETTER. AMONG OTHER THEMES INCLUDED IN
THE LETTER WERE: (A) BENEFICIAL SERVICES THE MASS MEDIA
CAN PERFORM, E.G., SPREADING CULTURAL VALUES AND
BRINGING PEOPLE CLOSER TOGETHER; (B) THE DANGERS
ARISING FROM MISUSE OF THE MEDIA, WHICH ARE EVIDENT
IN POLAND IN A VARIETY OF FORMS; (C) THE DUTY OF THE

CHURCH AND THE FAITHFUL TO OPPOSE SUCH MISUSE,
ESPECIALLY THAT DIRECTED AGAINST THE CHURCH AND
RELIGION; (D) THE DUTY OF PARENTS TO PROTECT CHILDREN
AGAINST IMPROPER MATERIAL IN THE MASS MEDIA; AND
(E) THE DESIRABILITY OF GIVING THE CHURCH ACCESS
TO BROADCAST MEDIA, ESPECIALLY SO THAT THOSE UNABLE
TO ATTEND MASS IN PERSON COULD DERIVE ITS BENEFITS
NEVERTHELESS.

3. COMMENT: NOT HAVING COPIES OF ANY PREVIOUS
PASTORAL LETTER ON THE MEDIA, WE ARE UNABLE TO SAY
WHETHER THE 1977 LETTER REPRESENTS AN
ESCALATION IN THE CHURCH'S CAMPAIGN, AND SPECIFICALLY
WHETHER THE CALL FOR PROTEST LETTERS IS A
NEW INITIATIVE. WE MIGHT NOTE THAT THE TWO ARTICLES
IN THE LETTER WE HAVE SEEN IN THE WEST EUROPEAN
PRESS (FRANKFURTER ALLEGEMEINE AND INTERNATIONAL HERALD
TRIBUNE) ARE LOWER IN KEY THAN THE POST STORY SEEMS TO
HAVE BEEN. NEITHER OUR CHURCH NOR MEDIA CONTACTS
PLACED ANY STRESS ON THE LETTER IN CONVERSATIONS
FOLLOWING ITS PUBLICATION. END COMMENT.

4. WE ARE FURNISHING COPIES OF THE PASTORAL LETTER
AND THE ALLEGEMEINE AND HERALD TRIBUNE ARTICLES TO
EUR/EE - SEYMOUR.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INFORMATION MEDIA, PRESS COMMENTS, PAPERS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Litigation History:
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Message ID: 62dc2a3e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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Review Transfer Date:
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SAS ID: 1146279
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLISH PASTORAL LETTER ON MASS MEDIA
TAGS: PINT, PL
To: STATE
Type: TE
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